

Arizona Commission on the Arts

**Guide to Grants for
Organizations and Schools
2009-2010**

Fiscal Year 2010 Grants

OVERVIEW

Grant Deadline: Thursday, March 19, 2009

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction – Page 3

- What's New This Year?
- 2009-2010, Fiscal Year 2010 Grant Application Deadline for Organizations and Schools
- How to Get Help

The Grant Process – Page 5

- Overall Eligibility
- Grant Application Limits
- Amount of Grant Award and Match Requirement
- Funding Priorities
- Continuing Support and Financial Need
- Who Reviews Grant Applications?
- Life of a Grant Application

The Electronic Grants Online Resource, or EGOR – Page 8

- What is EGOR?
- General Instructions for Completing an Application in EGOR

INTRODUCTION

One of 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies, the Arizona Commission on the Arts is an agency of the State of Arizona that supports a statewide arts network. The agency is governed by a 15-member Governor-appointed Commission and a professional staff, grounded in the arts. The Commission receives and administers funds from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts, and directs this funding to organizations and programs that contribute to the growth and stabilization of the arts, impact student learning, nurture and develop artists' craft and skills, preserve the rich traditions of Arizona communities, and encourage participation by citizens of all ages and abilities.

Awarding grants to Arizona arts organizations and schools is at the center of the Commission's service. In this effort grant applicants are our partners, bringing arts experiences directly to people throughout Arizona. To help carry out this mutual goal, the Commission provides a variety of funding opportunities that enable schools, organizations and community groups to carry out projects, and through general operating support, to maintain ongoing, high quality public arts programming.

What's New This Year?

Applicants who have previously applied and received Commission grants should pay special attention to the following changes to the agency's grant programs:

- The General Operating Support (GOS) grant areas have been restructured, creating the potential for slightly larger grants and providing clearer guidelines for entry into different levels of support.
- Small and emerging organizations may now be eligible for the new, smallest operating support grant, the Organizational Development Grant (ODG).
- Within the General Operating Support area, the Working Capital Reserves program has been put on indefinite hiatus.
- The majority of the application questions are now listed in each Guide to Grants document, providing applicants the opportunity to fully prepare responses prior to opening the grant application within the Electronic Grants Online Resource (EGOR).
- The review criteria for all grant areas have been reviewed and revised.
- The questions within the EGOR application have been reviewed and revised to correspond to revised evaluation criteria. In most cases, the application questions have been simplified.
- Some smaller Project Grant applications have been folded into other Project Grant areas. There are no longer distinct applications for American Masterpieces, Meet the Composer and Dance on Tour.
- The Commission has decreased the number of applications it will accept from one nonprofit organization during a grants cycle, in an effort to increase the potential awards within the General Operating Support areas.
- There have been changes to the Supplementary Materials requirements for different grant areas. As an example, Audio, Video and Visual materials are no longer accepted or reviewed in support of General Operating Support grants. Review the Supplementary Materials sections within each document for more information.

2009-2010, Fiscal Year 2010 Grant Application Deadline for Organizations and Schools

The deadline for application submission is Thursday, March 19, 2009.

Please be aware that some grant areas require Letters of Intent to Apply which must be postmarked by Monday, March 2, 2009. These requirements are outlined in the Guide to Grants documents.

The Commission office will be open until 5pm on Thursday, March 19, 2009 for applicant assistance. EGOR will accept complete applications until midnight on Thursday, March 19, 2009. The Commission does not advise waiting until the day of the deadline to submit applications.

EGOR provides an automated email response confirming that an applicant's electronic submission has been received. If an applicant does not receive such a confirmation, they are advised to contact the Commission.

Required supplementary materials must be submitted according to posted guidelines (see Guide to Grants documents) and either uploaded to EGOR or sent in one envelope, postmarked by Thursday, March 19, 2009.

How to Get Help

Please feel free to contact Commission staff to discuss any part of the grant application process. Relevant Commission staff contacts have been listed throughout the Guide to Grants documents.

Staff receives a high volume of calls and inquiries as the deadline nears, particularly during the week of the application deadline. Because staff lead many programs and travel to sites around the state, if you require assistance, you are encouraged to contact staff well in advance of the deadline.

New applicants are encouraged to contact Commission staff well in advance of the deadline to discuss proposed project(s).

In addition, new applicants may request Commission staff review draft applications for feedback. Only complete applications can be submitted as drafts. Drafts must be submitted through EGOR no later than Monday, March 2, 2009 and applicants must notify the appropriate Commission grant contact of draft submission. Staff review does not guarantee funding, but can help strengthen an application.

THE GRANT PROCESS

Overall Eligibility

An applicant must be incorporated as an Arizona nonprofit organization or school with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code; or be a unit of government.

Unincorporated Arizona organizations may apply for Project Grants, Arts Learning Grants, Arts Link to Tourism and the Economy Grants, Organizational Development Grants, and General Operating Support Grants (Level I only) through a fiscal sponsor. The fiscal sponsor organization must be an Arizona 501(c)3 or governmental organization.

Unincorporated Arizona organizations applying for Commission grants must:

- Identify the fiscal sponsor (on the Organization Profile page in the EGOR application),
- Include a signed original letter from the fiscal sponsor agreeing to serve as such (submitted with supplementary materials), and
- Include the fiscal sponsor's 501(c)3 letter (submitted with supplementary materials).

Acting as a fiscal sponsor does not jeopardize the sponsor's own grant application(s). Both the applicant and the fiscal sponsor should research and clearly understand the legal implications of this relationship.

Note that applicants who received Commission funding in fiscal year 2008 but failed to file a final report postmarked by November 15, 2008 are ineligible to apply for fiscal year 2010 grants.

Grant Application Limits

The Commission limits the number of applications that may be submitted by an applicant, as follows:

- Nonprofit organizations = 2 applications maximum
- Government departments and agencies = 2 applications maximum
- University/college departments = 1 application maximum
- Individual schools = 1 application maximum
- School district departments or units = 1 application maximum

Amount of Grant Award and Match Requirement

Because limited funding is available, grant awards are in most cases less than the full eligible amount. The amount of funding available for 2009-2010, fiscal year 2010 is dependent on the level of funding from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts. Considerations in determining grant awards include:

- The minimum grant award is \$750. Your budget must include at least \$1,500 in eligible fees.
- Most grants must be matched on at least a one-to-one cash basis by applicants.
- While in-kind contributions are useful in demonstrating support for a project, they may not be used to match grants.

In general, no organization may receive more than 15% of its overall budget from the Commission.

Each grant program has particular guidelines for determining the eligible fees and matching requirements. Applicants are encouraged to refer to the Guide to Grants documents to determine funding scales and eligible fees within different grant categories.

Funding Priorities

The Commission is charged with increasing participation in and access to arts experiences for all Arizonans and therefore the Commission welcomes applications from all eligible organizations and schools. Automatic positive (+) ranking marks are given to:

- Projects and organizations in rural areas of the state (communities outside of the metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix).
- Ethnic-run organizations and projects coordinated by such organizations. Ethnic-run organizations producing or presenting the arts must meet two of the following four criteria: the majority of board identifies as ethnic; the majority of staff identifies as ethnic; the majority of programs are identified as ethnic; the organization demonstrates involvement in ethnic community or communities.
- Organizations and projects representing and serving people with disabilities as their primary mission.

The positive (+) ranking marks provide applications with a step up during the funding allocation process. As an example, an application submitted by a rural, disabled, or ethnic-run organization that was ranked as a Medium in the panel process would be moved to a Medium-Plus ranking.

Continuing Support and Financial Need

Grant applications are evaluated according to published criteria. An award granted one year does not automatically indicate that review panels in subsequent years will continue to recommend support.

The Commission continues its support of service organizations.

The Commission has adopted a policy stating that "financial need" is not a criterion in determining funding. Both large and small arts organizations are encouraged to plan for the future by developing working capital or other reserves. An applicant that has an endowment or other reserve will not be penalized in the grant review process.

Who Reviews Grant Applications?

Applications are reviewed by peer review panels, comprised of volunteer panels of experts and experienced lay-people from across Arizona that assess applications' strengths and weaknesses according to published evaluation criteria.

Review panels are constructed annually by Commission staff, who select panelists from submitted panel nomination forms as a part of the Commission's open panelist nomination process. Commission staff also seek out panelists that provide diverse cultural, gender, experiential, generational and geographic representation, as well as panelists who represent people of different abilities.

Each review panel is chaired by a non-voting member of the Governor-appointed Commission, or board.

Life of a Grant Application

December 24, 2008:

Guide to Grants documents for the 2009-2010, Fiscal Year 2010 Grant Cycle are posted on the Commission website.

End of January 2009:

EGOR application system opens for application submission.

March 2, 2009:

Deadline for Letters of Intent to Apply, required for some grant areas. Deadline for submission of draft grant applications for review. (Review the Guide to Grants documents for more information.)

March 19, 2009:

Deadline for grant applications and postmarked supplementary materials for 2009-2010, Fiscal Year 2010 Grants for Organizations and Schools.

May 2009 (dates and locations TBA):

Applications are reviewed by peer review panels, during the Fiscal Year 2010 Review of Grants for Organizations and Schools. Each panel, chaired by a non-voting Commission member, makes recommendations to the Commission regarding which applications receive priority in funding. Commission staff does not vote in the process. Meetings are open to the public.

June 2009 (date and location TBA):

The Commission staff and board convene for a final decision on grant awards based on the priority recommendations of the panels and available funding. Meeting is open to the public.

On or near July 1, 2009:

All applicants receive notification by mail regarding the status of their applications (complete Arts Learning grant notification packets are mailed in August, annually). Prior to July 1, staff will not respond to inquiries related to the funding status of grant applications. Applicants may check on the status of their applications in EGOR after July 1.

August 2009:

Grant recipients must return signed award agreements and other related forms to *confirm their intention to claim their grant award* during the fiscal year.

July 2009 – May 2010:

Grant recipients must submit relevant materials to the Commission to *request payment for their grant*. In most cases and if the grant recipient can provide required materials, payments can be requested 45 days in advance of a project or event. However, due to the quarterly delivery of operating funds to the Commission, payments can take up to 4 weeks to process.

Funded organizations are required to submit a Final Report within 30 days of completion of a project. Final Reports are submitted electronically through EGOR.

THE ELECTRONIC GRANTS ONLINE RESOURCE, or EGOR

What is EGOR?

The Arizona Commission on the Arts uses an online grants application system, the Electronic Grants Online Resource, or EGOR, to receive and review grant applications from Arizona arts organizations, schools and community groups. This electronic grants application system allows the Commission to capture and archive applicant information, and allows grant review panels to review applications in consistent formats and structures.

The Commission will not accept applications by means other than EGOR. If applicants do not have internet access, they are advised to contact local public libraries and local arts agencies, many of which offer public internet access. If extenuating circumstances prohibit applicants from using EGOR, they are advised to contact the Commission well before the application deadline to make alternative arrangements for application submission.

General Instructions for Completing an Application in EGOR

Before preparing applications, applicants are encouraged to thoroughly review the Guide to Grants documents relevant to their grant application(s). These documents outline the application questions and evaluation criteria, and describe required and optional supplementary materials.

Applicants are encouraged to develop responses to all application questions and information requests using word processing software and to copy and paste completed responses into the EGOR application.

Within the EGOR system, applicants are presented with a series of questions and requests for information. Some of these questions and requests require applicants to use check boxes and drop-down selection screens, and others require a narrative response.

For narrative responses, applicants should use upper/lower case letters (not all caps). Formatted text is not accepted by EGOR: applicants cannot bold, italicize or underline text, or change font style or size.

Narrative responses are limited to a maximum character (not word) count. Note the maximum number of characters before developing narrative responses. Applicants will be notified if the maximum character count has been exceeded. **For numeric amount responses, enter only whole numbers (no decimals, commas or dollar signs).**

Applicants must tab or mouse from question to question, and are advised not to use the “enter” key to move to different areas of the page. When an applicant hits “enter,” the system will attempt to save the page, at which point applicants who have not yet completed the page may receive an error message. EGOR will not allow applicants to submit incomplete applications.

EGOR “times out” if an applicant remains on one page for an extended period of time. To avoid losing work, please save often. If applicants choose to enter placeholder information into a field to progress through EGOR, they are responsible for updating this information before submitting the application. Once submitted, applicants no longer have access to their grant application(s).

Applicants must review their responses and edit applications to meet the specifications outlined in the Guide to Grants documents. There is no spell check feature within EGOR.

Again, applicants are encouraged to develop responses to all application questions and information requests (including budget information) using word processing software, wherein applicants can spell-check and monitor character count. Applicants are further encouraged to save often, and once responses are complete and edited, to copy and paste responses into the EGOR application.